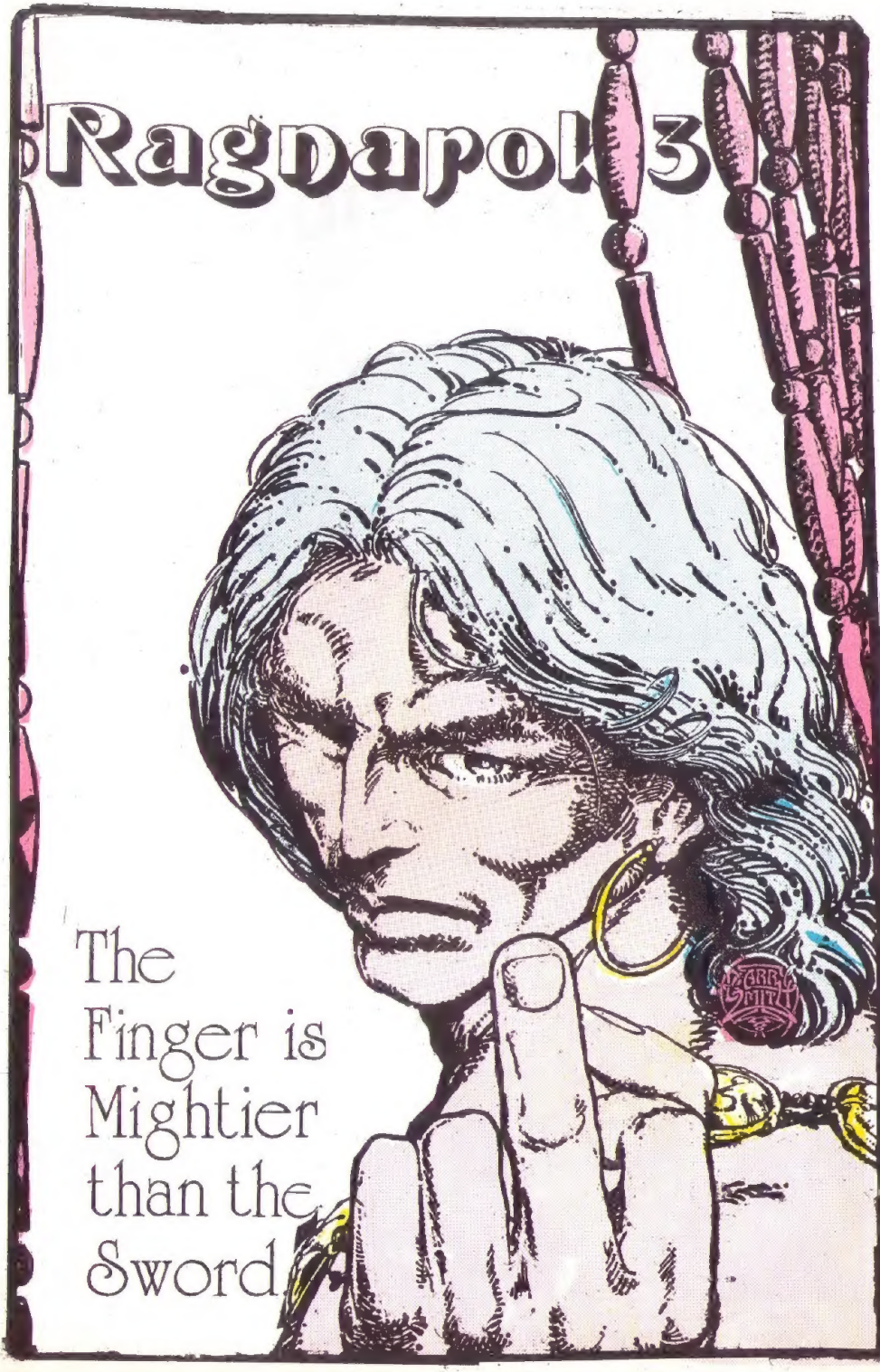
Ragnarok 3



From the pages of Berni Wright-on's 'zine, Good-Time Tales we present...

THE INVASION

Art & story deftly perpetrated by Matt Howarth '72

BUS STOP
DAILY NUZ
I say- you wouldn't happen to have the time, would you?
It's almost ten.
Oh Darn!
What's wrong?
Well, you see- I'm an advanced scout for an interstellar invasion. I was supposed to go to the U.N. to deliver an ultimatum.
So...I decided to try a bus.
I haven't been able to get a taxi all day.
1

Thanks to Paul Kupperberg for the 2 convention articles he suplied us with.

Continued on page 48.....

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YE OL' ED, MARK COLLINS, HARD AT WORK...

EDITORS

Mark Collins
Eli Friedman

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Layout
Mark Collins

Editorial Notes

Well, here we are, back again for the third issue of Ragnarok. We have some new featurs & some great art that we hope you will enjoy. We stated in out last issue that we would be having a interview with Jack Davis. This was so, but unfortunetly there was something wrong with the recorder we used resulting in a garbled tape. In it's place we have the Barry Smith in-terview. We also included some Davis material plus the Davis poster. Many thanks to Jack any way, and we hope to get togeather for another interview sometime. We also give a big hand to Barry Smith and Vaughn Bodē for giving us the time for the interviews we present in this issue.Also to Dave Simons, Manny Marris and Al Shuster for their help with the issue. If you happen to take a look at our house-ad page you will notice that we have published the seconed Junkwaffel posted by Vaughn. Its great for coloring and a must for any Bodē fan. You can order it from Eli (see ad). As time goes on we will be putting out varrious new publications, so keep your eyes open. Well that's about all we have to say for this issue. Let us know about any comments you have to make. Also, we are looking, as always, for new artists & writ-ters. If you think you fill the bill send us some samples. So, 'till next time...

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LETTERS

Jim Jones
Vista, Calif.

Dear Mark,
Recived Ragnarok #2. VERY ENJOYABLE!!! LIKED IT!!! Read it from cover to cover --wish I had the time to write about--well--EVERYTHING I LIKED!!! Sure--you had a number of page layout problems--SO WHAT!!! I look & read for fun---I had FUN looking at & reading Ragnarok 2. Comment on Steve Jenkins piece: When I started buying comic-books they were 10¢---now 20¢---50¢---$1. A quart of milk 9¢---25¢, a kid could go into any movie 10¢--now--75¢ NO!!! A comic book (32 pages) is still a good buy... when compaired to the BIG...BIG jump in ALL prices!!!

Laurine White
Sacramento, Calif.

Mark Collins,
The covers were quite nice and I was very surprised to see them in color. In appearance, issue 2 is quite an improvement over the first issue. But I enjoyed issue one more and I'll tell you why. The articles by George Schwartz, David Simons, Jeffrey H. Wasserman, and Steve Jenkins were poorly written. They are so neat with even margins and something especially like Three In One is very disappointing. David Simons consumer report should be useful for New York fans. I've read better con reports, but King Con was interesting. I enjoyed the photos. Liam O'Connor's "What if" could have been better also. His comments on EC Con needed expanding. I think his article would have been more interesting if he had given a little more explanation about nobody being there. **(It should have said "I got to hang around with the gang. It was bad as a dealer, I had nobody to sell to...ED.)**

On the positive side: Although I've never heard of Bonnie Swirynsky, tell her I really liked her spot illos, especially of Vampirella, Thor and GL. Hanley's art was good, but not his best. I liked the art by Ammerman, Krenkel and Ivie. Really great Fujitake poster! The article by Joe Brancatelli was very well written, the best in the zine

Randy Medoff
Hartsdale, N.Y.

Hi There!
I bought Ragnarok 2 at a N.Y. con yesterday. You apparently need LOC's, so here's mine:

The cover was pretty good, tho' I don't care for sketches. However, the color helped. **(That was a inked drawing. Ed.)** Inside front cover-fair.

The next Harrison illo, P.3, was pretty good, but somewhat dis-proportioned. Why wasn't Harrison listed under "Artists this issue"? **(It was just a mistake, it should have been there. ED.)**

Pozner's article had little to it, but once he gets going, I think it'll be very good.

Simons' report was very informative. I believe this is the only column of its type around fandom, please hold on to it! **(For this to work, readers from around the country will have to send in their own reports, which will be printed in Dave's column. ED.)** I must correct him on the first shop mentioned. The name (which Dave left out) is "Ye Olde Book Shoppe", which I visited in Nov., 1971, the year he was there for the second time. But the prices were cheap!!! They simply had rows and rows of mixed DC's and Marvels at 5 for $1!

I found Fagan's article excellent, tho' I was not at the 1972 July Con! The photos were good, a fine addition to the writing.

When I turned to P.20, I was finally pleased art-wise! There I saw a fine Doc Strange pic by Harrison, in Ditko tradtion.

O'Connors piece? A waste of time. Not worth comment.

The Hanley centerfold was---ecch!! However, the great Fujitake fold-out makes up for Hanley! What a pleasant surprise!!!

The Severin interview was interestin'. The opening illo was good, and the one on P.28

was very good!! Who did it? Sal Buscema? **(Marie did it!!! It was her interview! It was inked by her brother John, I believe.)**

All in all, I found Ragnarok 2 to be one of the better art 'n article fanzines in fandom, and a good change of pace from stripzines. Keep up the good work.

Mark Ammerman
KSC, Kutztown PA.

Dear Mark-

Finally got around to comment on Ragnarok #2...also glad it finally came out! First of all, I was really pleased with the color on my back cover (and I'll always be proud of sharing the same cover, so to speak, with Marie Severin...).Speaking of M.S., all of her art was great and really appreciated. The interview was one of the best fan interviews that I've read to date, and was pretty damn interresting. I guess everyone knows by now that the girl mentioned in the interview (the Vision lover) is PATY...who is now a full-time Marvel bull-penner. And she's also pretty much into Fandom (doing a lot of work on Comic Courier, my old fanzine now edited by Mike Graycar).

HORROR comes to Archie Comics. (part two)

by /effrey /—/. ///asserman

A year ago, Archie Comics made an attempt to enter into the horror field of comics with their Chilling Adventures in Sorcery as Told by Sabrina. The premiere issue of that comic was reviewed by this writer in Ragnarok 2. The fates have smiled upon us, making it possible for this writer to again review an issue of Sorcery for Ragnarok.

Archie Comics, under the guise of the Red Circle Comics Group, released the third issue of Sorcery in late June. This was after a publishing lull of eight months for the comic. Under the creative control of Gray Morrow (who edited, wrote and drew Sorcery 3), Sabrina the teen-age witch was dropped as the contents' narrator and from the title of the comic.

The 'Archie' art-style was replaced with the often-stunning artwork of Morrow's. The first offering of Sorcery 3, "...Cat!". has by far the best artwork in the book. This is due to the bright colors and good use of shading that was employed. The rest of the book has very pretty art, but not as eye-striking as "...Cat!"

"...Cat!" concerns a cat burglar who is determined to make it big on a Caribbean island. When the crook conspires with a pretty young thing to rid her of her possessing uncle, the cat learns that he has bitten off more than he can chew: her guardian relative is a warlock. Confronted by a vengeful uncle-turned-cobra, the young niece appears at the burglar's side and assumes the form of a mongoose. She quickly kills her warlock uncle in true-to-mongoose style, and then extends her gratitude to the thief by changing him into (what else) a cat.

Doctor Burris travels back through time in his time machine to find the "Missing Link." He discovers a tribe of subhumans, but no cro-magnon man. It is only after he is marooned in prehistoric times and has settled down with one of the cavewomen that he realizes that their child is the missing link that he had sought.

"The Immortality Factor" features Arden Miller who barges in during a weird experiment involving his sister and a strange man and who kills the doctor. In his dying breaths, the physician explains his actions. Miller's sister had fallen victim to a hospitalized vampire and the doctor was striving to cure her. It then dawns upon Arden that the patient who asked him to interfere with the operation is the vampire. Too late! The doctor breathes his last and Arden is beset upon by both the vampire and his sister.

A lawyer responsible for the murder of an art connoisseur finds his guilty deed re-enacted in the oil paintings of his dead client's "Haunted Gallery." Driven to his breaking point, the lawyer confesses to the murder with art-lovers present as witnesses. It seems that the dead man's wife had the paintings in the gallery treated so that the lawyer would "see" himself in the act of murdering her husband. She thanks the painter who prepared the thirteen paintings that tripped up the murderer. The painter replies by insisting that he only touched up twelve paintings. Both widow and painter are stunned as they realized that the thirteenth painting was created by the dead man! It clearly shows his murderer in the death seat!

The outstanding factor of each story is its artwork. The storylines seem very simple and the dialogue appears to be very long-winded. Marvel Comics solved this problem a few years back when they decided to cut their heroes' soliloquies into several small word balloons rather than keep it all in one. The small word ballons also serve as useful devices for paragraphing when a panel's dialogue drifts into various topics. Morrow would be wise to practice this format next issue.

Good use of color, zip-a-tone and cross-hatching give the artwork the feeling of depth, shadows, and contrast of colors. As noted earlier, "...Cat!" contains all the elements listed above in fine style.

Taking the entire issue into consideration Chilling Adventures in Sorcery cannot be rated either good or bad; respectable would be a far better adjective. Since the newsstands now over flowing with the sorcery/horror/mystery element, Archie/Red Circle Comics. revamped Sorcery is merely a resepectable entry. Perhaps at some earlier time it could have been more that that.

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That's right. The second Junkwaffel poster is now out. A 17 x 22, black & white reproduction of the second installment of Bodē's proposed Sunday strip, with Junkwaffel soldiers and great Bodē humor. Fun to color in yourself. The cost is only $1 + 30¢ postage and hand-ling. Send to:

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A INTERVIEW WITH:

VAUGHN BODE and his CARTOON CONCERT
Interviewed by Mark & Steve Collins and Dave Simons. Edited and Transcribed by Eli Friedman.

Rag: Let's start off with some background When and where were you born and what sort of art training did you have?

Vaughn: I was born in 1941 in Syracuse, New York. That makes me 33 years old. The art training that I got, was really, I taught myself how to draw. I went into college only after a long, long time. I had already been in commercial art. I, like really got involved in. But, I was involved in my artwork sort of as a tool to get inside my fantasys. Art was like a really fantastic trip to me, because I lived in my fantasys. I had the ability to imagine things in full color, three dimensions, sound and feelings. So, I got into this real trip. I was into my little planets and stuff. Traveling around and every-thing.

RAG: You said that you did commercial art?

Vaughn: Yeah. I was an art Director.

Rag: How did you feel about it?

Vaughn: It sucked.

Rag: You didn't enjoy doing it?

Vaughn: No, I didn't. It was a big drag. It was really no good at all. The artist doesn't do anything at all, and then they don't do it very well. So, I'm not interested. I really dislike commercial art. I was into it too long.

Rag: Do you collect any comics? Newsstand comics, aside from underground stuff?

Vaughn: No.

Rag. How did you get the inspiration for the lizards?

Vaughn: That started back in ninth grade, when I first started drawing lizards, and getting into that whole trip. Some friends of mine, as a matter of fact one of the friends who came all the way down from Syracuse with a couple of other teachers, came just to see the show. He's one of the people who started me off on drawing lizards. We just got laughing one day in school, and I always sort of liked frogs, and they became lizards.

AND INTRODUCING BELINDA BUMP

Rag: When you draw what sort of tools do you use? When you ink, color?

Vaughn: Well, I use felt markers. I draw with a flair pen, and then I use regular felt markers for everything else, for color.

Rag: Most of the color is photographic?

Vaughn: My stuff is all photographic seperation. They're doing it with all of them now. I sort of forced them to do that. I like the way my color comes out, and I don't like color hand seperation. I did a lot of that.

Rag: When did you first set yourself up around New York?

Vaughn: Well, I tried to sell my work in 1960, way back then. And nobody was interested in anyone who does things things like "The Man" and lizards, and things.

Rag: "The Man" is completely different from your Junkwaffel style.

Vaughn: It's a very early version of my work. And I was trying something out, a very heavy thing.

Rag: Do you have any hobbys outside of drawing?

Vaughn: As a matter of fact I spend most of my time getting things things together like this show, (Bode's cartoon concert show, for those who haven't seen it, is a slide show of Vaughn's work, with voices read aloud by Vaughn. Dell Books has released a paperback of it called "Cartoon Concert"., and New York dealer Emanuel Maris sells tapes of the live voice track.)

Vaughn: And working and studying things

like mind control, and studing alpha feedback and high concious education, hich con-cious training.

Rag: You mean with a headset you attach to the earlobes?

Vaughn: I've got an alpha pacer, and alpha feedback pacer.

Rag: Does it work well?

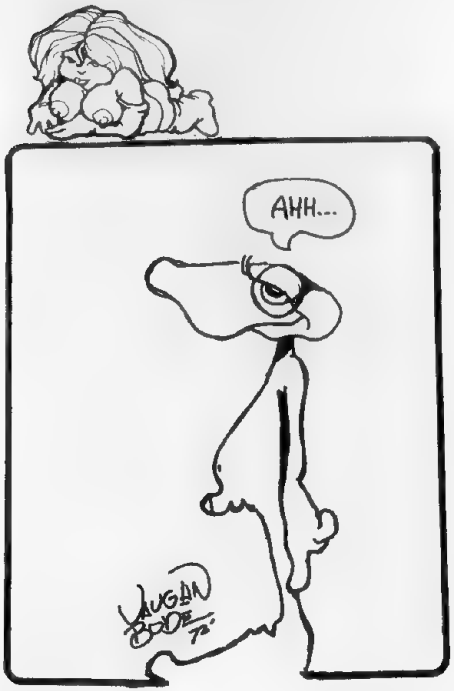
Vaughn: Yeah. Well, it's good training device for meditation. But I got that to do, and the show to put togeather. And it's really like I'm starting a new career. It's like I'm giving up the first phase of my work, which is cartooning. And soon I won't be cartooning very much at all. Except for doing new shows, I'll be doing all my work for shows.

Rag: Then what will you do?

Vaughn: Well, I'll give shows!

Rag: Are you getting into doing movies?

Vaughn: Yeah, I hope that I'll be doing movies, but I'm not particulary interested in myself working on them. I'll storyboard them, and I'll sell them, and I'd like to see them done. See, originally Ralph Bakshi, who did Fritz the Cat, and Heavy Traffic, was also interested in doing "Deadbone." And he had the movies slated as "Fritz the Cat" first and "Deadbone" second.



Rag: Did that fall through or what?

Vaughn: Oh, I think that fell through, but I've got it with a agent anyway.

Rag: If someone were to do the film would you like to see Bakshi do it, or is there someone else you would like to see do it?

Vaughn: Well as long as I felt I was protected in a contract for style and content and everything, Ralph Bakshi would certainly be able to do it. If I had a certain amount of creative control, he's realt excellent

Rag: Do you have to get into a certain frame of mind to do your stories?

Vaughn: Yeah, I go throug a real trauma to get into my work each month. I mean, it's really, really heavy. It's hard. It's exhausting. That's why I don't work that much. I only work a week out of every month. On the actual artwork, I never go into a studio. That's why when people ask me to do sketches that's a little freaky for me. I never sketch. I don't sit around. Like today, probably because I'm speeding a little from everything that's happening here, I'm doodeling.

Rag: When did you meet Jeff Jones?

Vaughn: A number of years ago, at a convention. I always liked his work. So we've become best friends since then. Even having our studio together. Which is really something, because I always used to go, "Wow, Jeff Jones!" Now we're into this, like he's painting away, and having all his problems, and I'm drawing away and having all my problems, and we're into this together. And I see him creating all this fantastic stuff, he helped me tremendously on this show. He really worked hard to help get it togeather. And it works out real good.

Rag: How did you first get involved with "National Lampoon"?

Vaughn: I approached the "National Lampoon" when it started, and I knew some of the people there, so then finally Mike Gross opened up the Sunday Funnys, the Funny Pages...

Rag: Did you have any trouble combining your style with Berni Wrightson when you two did "Purple Pictography"?

Vaughn: Not at all. Because I didn't do any of the drawing on it at all. All I did was write it. I wrote it,or I suggested a few changes, or a few things like layout, design.

Rag: The color was very different from

what Berni usually likes to work in, very muted shades and dark colors.

Vaughn: Yeah, well he was working towards what we had discussed as what they wanted, he was trying to please the people, you understand.

Rag: You said that you work one week out of every month. What's your work speed?

Vaughn: Very fast. I really am very fast, about the fastest I've ever know of any artist that I've met. I mean others can work and turn out a great deal of pages, but to actually do your own writing and your own design and layout and everything else... I taught myself to be fast, that's why I use the markers, but still it's a lot of work. The three color pages a month. Plus I keep a journal and have since 1960. Which takes up time to write in that. And all my other projects.

Rag: How did you get the idea for Cheech Wizard?

Vaughn: From a chee-chee nut, which is an Italian thing. Everybody thought that I did it because of Harlan Ellison, because Harlan used to be called Cheech. And that's not so, because I invented Cheech Wizard way back in 1957 or 1955 or so. He's one of my oldest characters, and the land of Chesslania.

Rag: When you do the voice for Cheech in your show it sounds like W.C. Fields. Why is that?

Vaughn:Well, I can't of what else would go along with it, 'cause I wanted to seperate him. It's just an all-knowing personality. I always try to show bulges in his stupid-ass hat to show he has hands. My favorite Cheech Wizard strip is the bust one, the one where he's getting busted.

Rag: Did you ever do animation?

Vaughn: Well, I know about animation because a long time ago that's what I was interested in doing. Animating. I wanted to be a Disney animaton, except that they don't do tits, at least not yet

No?

FRED POHL

Rag: Except in "Fantasia"'

Vaughn: Yeah. About Cheech, 'Cause I've been familiar with him for years and years, I have some unpublished Cheech Wizard, quite weird unpublished things that I've done. Like I invented 1,500 cartoon characters, and most of them are not known. I've got like a filing cabinet full of packages of characters.

Rag: Do you have any plans for them?

Vaughn: Yes I do. There are so many nice ones that I've got.

Rag: When did you decide to be an artist?

Vaughn: I sort of got decided. It wasn't anything that I tried. I wanted to be a pilot, I wanted to be a helicopter pilot. I learned to fly, and I did parachute jumps for a while, free fall and sky-diving.

Rag: With your machine characters do you have a file of those?

Vaughn? I have a file of those and the whole series was originally called "The Robotics." And there are about sixty machines, there are quite a number of them.

Rag: Is Cheech Wizard your favorite character?

Vaughn: Yes. Well, my lizards are my favor-

(C) 1973 Benjamin M. Yalow

ite characters. And the Broads. Cheech Wizard isn't a lizard. He commands the lizards. He's a people. A stunted pervert. A deviant.

Rag: Are you going to be using 5 Ply anymore?

Vaughn: I'd sure like to use him because he's one of the best characters I've ever invented. But I've got so many of them, man. I've got something called Moon Woods that nobody's ever seen. I've got Iron Gas, and J.W.A.S. and...like these are all different series, sets that I've done. Celtsia, Pan Well, let's see what else. Kluger-putch which is like a 200 page book that's all done, except it won't be like a comic book, it's all notes, on the equipment and the characters.

Rag: Do you think your stuff in Cavalier will ever be in a book, like Anne Fannie?

Vaughn: Yeah, it is. It's called "Bode's Cartoon Concert". A b&w papperback. I had the chance to do a national daily strip. To do it with Hall Syndicate for a real nice contract. But I turned it down.

Rag: That's what the Junkwaffel posters were (#2 available from us). They look like Sunday Pages.

Vaughn: Right, I did that for Hall-Syndicate, and it freaked them out. They thought it was too underground, and I thought it was the most mellow stuff I ever did. I have a Cheech Wizzard book out, and its really naive compared to what Cheech really is. But I thought maybe I'd just do it that way, because it's kind of funny, it's kind of cute. Like a B.C., Cheech Wizard. I did that, and they wanted me to sign a contract not on that but on related material, but I decided at the time that I didn't want to. I didn't want to stick myself with a long term contract and be forced to do what I concider junk. And if you can't do tits, what's the fun?

Right!

Rag: Is there anything special that you're trying to accomplish with your artwork, or is it just a visualization of your fantasies?

Vaughn: Well, I'm trying to evolve my art to the highest possible plane that I can. I may eventually wind up not doing cartoons any more; after a number of years. It seems likely that I'm going in that direction. Where as I'm evolving right or wrong now, I'll be less and less into cartoons and more and more into the slide performances, and from there to more special projects, and specialized art forms. Eventually like I'll want to do paintings, murals, and giant sculptures. Like sculptures of giant lizards. You know the G.I. Joe same kind of set up, so that you can move them all around. Like a eight foot tall lizard.

Rag: Have you done any small sculptures?

Vaughn: Yeah, I've got about thirty of them. Of all my major characters.

Rag: Jeff Jones made a lot of money with his sculptures.

Vaughn: Well, Larry Todd and I made these. They're collaborations that nobodys ever seen. Like all the characters of Sunpot are done in full color sculptures.

Rag: Did they turn out the way you wanted them to?

Vaughn: Yeah, pretty much. We worked on it for a long time.

Rag: How did you go about doing it?

Vaughn: I just sculpted it out of sculpting material, or he did. And then when

we cured it, he or I painted it. Usually it was him who painted it. We worked togeather for a long time.

Rag: That would make a great art display.

Vaughn: Yeah, it would. It would really freak a lot of people out. I'm gonna do that, I'm gonna put them up, because they're that well done. Some are. But they're breaking up now. They're falling apart. I've got a box of broken ones.

Rag: Does all the action of your characters take place on the same planet, different planets, or what?

Vaughn: I've got hundreds of planets. I've got lots of planets, boy. Like Klugerputch is like this big planet series, right. And the model sheets and things like that that I've got on it, Klugerputch has 125 moons. And I've got them all listed, and I've got them all drawn and information about all of them. That's one of the projects that the TK II company is going to do, that's my company in Boston. Me and Bob Weiner. The first project that we're doing is a portfolio of pencilled illustrations. The portfolio that I did for the artists that cover collaborated with me. What I did was I drew them and they'd take them and project them on their canvas, and they'd copy them off and paint them. Nothing else works. That's how we did those covers. (Fantagore, etc.) Or, nothing else works as well.

Rag: How long does it take you to do a cover, like the Junkwaffel #1 cover?

Vaughn: That particular one took me three days without sleep. Three days stright like I was really falling off the chair and everything. But I did it. And I didn't do it to do the poster either. I just did it to do the biggest poster I'd ever done.

Rag: Did you do it to meet a deadline?

Vaughn: No, I was just in this real creative thing. I don't do enough work really that is just for non-reproduction.

Rag: What about your character names?

Vaughn: I've got some character names. I've got a chronological list...no, a alphabetical listing directory book of all the characters. And I went through them at one time, ofcourse I've invented more since then.

Rag: How much work are you doing at present? Do you have time?

Vaughn: It's very, very strange. Artists can't work all the time. You'd think being an artist, and even I think...look

at that nice white page, in just an hour I could have a really fantastic illustration there. But it's really, really something else. No artist that I know of, who hasn't got some real marble problems, can draw constantly, because it takes so much creative concentration. It's like getting in line, it's a total energy alignment trip and a unification experience with the paper, and you drain off all kinds of psychic energy with it. And that's why you can't do it very often, you see.

Rag: Who influenced you?

Vaughn: Walt Disney Fantasia, and the Mickey Mouse-Donald Duck Pleasant Valley was a big thing with me. "Wind in the Willows" super fascinated me. Wally Wood, and especially B.T. Hamlyn "Alley Oop." In walt Kelley's Pogo. Those are the ones that inflence me. I didn't really know many of the others. Al Williamson and Angelo Torres.

Rag: Did you ever want to draw a daily or Sunday newspaper strip?

Vaughn: If they let me draw tits!

Rag: It doesn't take much to keep you happy.

Vaughn: I say tits, because if they let me draw tits, they'll let me draw every-thing up to it. In other words, they'd let me draw situations, and make comments that they wouldn't let me say now I'm really talking about a liberated form. There is a syndicate, The Chronicle Syndicate that's in California that's pretty liberal. And I was thinking of showing them some of my work and then...or selling a syndicated strip and then hiring someone, an artist to drawit, instead of doing it myself.

Rag: You could probably get away with some of your politically oriented stuff, like "Da Duel."

Vaughn: Yeah, I could do that. But I really don't like to do all that political stuff. I did that only because I was really zonked over the Kent State killings. And that's what that is, a satire on that.

Rag: Have you gotten any real negative attitudes towards your comics?

Vaughn: From people? Yes, I very often get some people who don't like my work at all, and don't like what I'm doing, or just can't communicate on this kind of graphic cartoon level. In colleges I may have the problem of people saying, "Hell, you've got too much violence" or this is really too heavy. or sexist material. Like I did "Whorse Soldiers", and that was actually like a real heavy satire on women's liberation. And I'm a sexual social satirist, right? I can do that stuff. It's not going to go without notice from woman's liberationists.

Rag: What was the first comic con you attended?

Vaughn: The very first I think was Phil Seuling's first ComicCon...No, the first con was the Philcon a long, long time ago, when I was working for Glaxy magazine. And nobody knew my name or my work or anything. It was real strange. A lot of my friends who are young artists are in that same position. And I try to assure them that it's just a change over thing, and that they'll be doing the same thing, they just have to have the patience. And your work has to get known. A slow awareness.

Rag: When did you feel that you were first getting noticed?

Vaughn: I don't know. I suppose in the undergrounds before any place else. I suppose I still am pretty well known in the undergrounds mainly. I've got almost more books out now than almost anybody else in the undergrounds.

Rag: Who is your favorite underground artist?

Vaughn: Well, Robert Crumb is my favorite of all of them, then Dave Sheridan and Corben. But I feel that Corben is not in the same area as Crumb, so when I'm thinking underground I'm thinking something else. But I'd list Corben as tops in one whole part of the undergrounds. He's just a genius. Crumb is a genius, and they're two different kinds, with two different ways.

Rag: How do you divide the two ways?

Vaughn: Well, I'm thinking of style and content and the whole sexual explorations are different. The intensitys, the whole violence trip, and everything else between the two are widely spaced and styled. And characters. The whole trip that they're both trying to do is quite different. It seems like you could divide that with a group of people who are going in that direction, and a whole group going in another direction.

Rag: How about Shelton and The Freak Brothers?

Vaughn: Yeah, I like that very much, they're really funny. I met him in San Fransisco, he's got fantastic eyes, real -ly freaked me out.

Rag: Does your brother do the same type of stuff you do?

Vaughn: As a matter of fact, the Lampoon cartoon concert in December has a poster he did, a portrait of me that he painted. When he gets into it, he paints like Rock -well. He's really a tremendous artist, and he painted this thing. We worked on it to make it good.

Rag: Perhaps the most important question and our last: Do you think that being left handed makes any difference at all?

Vaughn: Well actually I'm ambidextrous. I've drawn with my right hand. I always wondered if I could do it. I can draw the same style, it just takes about four times as long. And Jeff Jones is ambidextrous. He paints with one hand, draws with the other.

Rag: At the same time.

Vaughn: Yeah, but you get mixed up. If you're schizo you can do it.

Rag: Thanks so much Vaughn for your time and trouble and your titanic art and super imagination.

The preceding was taped live at Creation Con by: Dave Simons
Mark Collins
and Mark's bothersome twin, Stephen.

This event took place on a Frogmelon Mushball machine at 99.9 rpm. Edited and transcribed at the Friedman Institute for the crim inally slow.
Th-th-th-that's all folks!

COSTUME PARADE:

Villain, The Victory Is Thine!

BY TOM FAGAN
PHOTOS BY BRUCE MITTELMAN

Angelique Trouvere as the second Vampirella.

Did justice triumph?

Not so you'd know at at the 1973 New York Comic Art Convention. Crime paid off there. The Costume Parade was a steal!

No, this isn't an expose. Don't get set for tittalating tales of ballot stuffing or atrocious accusations of judges being bribed. Nothing was fixed; everything was on the up and up.

A "Little Watergate"? Hardly!

Just another way of saying... Villains (male and female; human and inhuman) stole the Sixth Annual show ...yes, the bad guys won out. They made away with all the honors and "their crime" was committed before hundreds of people who were not only involved, but delighted!

It was a first in the annals of wickedness. It was also a first in the New York Comic Art Costume Convocation. Heroes and heroines stood with capes drooping; barbarians were baffled. All were powerless before the forces of evil.

With the result...

Injustice triumphed! Man, did it ever!

Malevolent in their grandeur and caustic in their coolness, the scoundrels of the evening easily purloined the bonded prizes and the approval of their peers.

Ming the Merciless casually bested an opposing Flash Gordon to win the $100 bond first prize. His costuming was magnificent, his stature haughty even after he acknowledged his true identity of Cortlandt Hull of Bristol, Connecticut.

A contingent from Delaware (or was it Apokilips?)divided the spoils of the second prize... a $50 bond. Supremely arrogant was Darkseid.

Thulsa Doom, also known as Al Bradford.

Cortlandt Hull as this year's first prize winner, Ming The Merciless.

Flanking him was whip-welding DeSade and, frightening with futuristic weapon fixed and firing into the crowd, was one of the devil warriors from the loathsome domain.

In turn Darkseid was identified as Craig Dawson. DeSade answered to the name of Tom Watkins (long time Costume Parade favorite who twice before won first place accolades for his roles of Wonder Warthog and Solomon Grundy. The devilish warmonger? None other than Allan Tillotson... in real life one of the nicest persons you'll ever have the pleasure of meeting!

Billed as "Fandom's Fabulous Femme" and representing the wild, wild world of Warren, was Heidi Saha of Kenilworth, New Jersey. Holding a winged bat in flight, she struck the regal pose of that virgin of violence, Vampirella to net the third prize of a $25 bond. Ms. Saha, herself a veteran of Con Costume Processions, is a previous winner with double credits scored as Wilma Deering and Sheena, Queen of the Jungle!

Vampirella drained tough competition though this time. Judges were treated to not only a double-take, but a second Vampirella, this one the fanged but alluring Angelique Trouvere. However, Angelique, who startled one judge with a playful bump-and-grind, paled in the light of Ms. Saha's winning ways.

Though not a titled winner, judges agreed unanimously that Wilmington, Delaware's own Jack Harris was a winner in his own right by his excellent portrayal of Two-Face. With one side of his features hideously "scarred" Harris took the stage to leer and laugh as he flipped a two-headed coin.

Later, Judge Sergio Aragones congratulated him by presenting Harris with a special sketch of Two-Face gleefully scaring off a ComiCon retinue. What's more, Harris was invited to re-don his two-toned, double-breasted suit and split personality guise of Two-Face for the 1973 Rutland, Vermont Hallowe'en Parade. And Harris, without double-talk, has agreed.

Judging was not easy, nor was it particularly safe. Judge Tom Fagan narrowly escaped having his eyeglasses removed by DeSade's snaking whip. And a leaping, bouncing Demon missed by inches crashing into the midst of the other judges C.C. Beck, Jeff Jones, and Aragones. Nevertheless, none of the aforementioned four would have missed a moment of that wry and whacky fun-filled hour on July 6th.

Third prize winner Hiedi Saha as Vampirella.

From left to right: Craig Dawson as the evil Darkseid, Tom Watkins as DeSade, and Allan Tillotson as one of Darkseid's evil warriors. This was the group that won second prize.

costume parade photos

Jay Bosset as Doctor Fate.

David Inger snarls at the audience as Two-Face.

Energy crackles in the air, a hidden flashbulb in his belt flashes, and David Burd appears on the stage as Dynamo.

Which begins:

With David Burd snatching the spotlight as Dynamo to generate the initial excitement. Whereupon miming purposely on stage comes David Finger as the Joker ("Neal Adams version"). "Lies! Lies! Lies!" giggles Finger, who, with a fiendish flourish pointedly rips a current issue of Batman Comics to shreds. With each tear Joker fans lustily cackle their approval. Shades of a Wertham revival! Finger proves you don't slur with impunity. (Look out Denny O'Neil! Beware Neal Adams! HA-ha!!)

Friday's stage is set. The audience... they're relating. Camaras click; flashbulbs shudder; video records. Debbi Feliziani of King Features heralds the costume call.

Catwoman prowls answering in a purry fury... no longer Barbara Arnstein, but a spitfire with claws unsheathed should Batman swing into view. He does, this creature of the night, but keeps a respectable distance, for Arnie Starr has no intentions of being scratched off the crimefighters list. Catwoman snarls her frustration.

"Hey, his ears are for real!" whispers someone of Gene Grillo, masquerading as the enterprising Mr. Spock. "Naw!" comes the worldly-wise observation of onlooker Gwenn Seuling, "He's got 'em pinned back with paperclips!"

Thunder of applause (not the celestial kind) greets the young Grimaldi children, suddenly transformed into diminutive manisfestations of Mary Marvel and Captain Marvel, Jr.

Famed Beck- Cons. (Arrrrrgh!) Lightning flashes and Pat O'Neill materializes as a full-sized Captain Marvel, Jr. But where is his senior namessake? For, inching his way across the stage in one of the cleverest costumes of all, is Mr. Mind. Marc Bilgrey, as the wicked, wily worm, blows everyone's mind and almost tumbles off the stage in doing it!

Yet, even a greater mind-mushrooming explosion is in store:

Imagine a member of the establish-ment wandering into a comicon. Picture his confused predicament suddenly finding himself standing before an equally amazed horde.

Would you do as he did? Turn towards the master... er, mistress of ceremonies as if seeking an explanation... then deciding to brazen it out, faces the quieted multitude jamming all available space in the Windsor Ballroom.

James Glenn of Brooklyn as Flash Gordon.

With a grin, he taps the ashes from his cigar, and, with a raising of wyebrows, acknowledges the packed-in crowd. Then, and only then, comes the roar of recognition, the whistles of appreciation, the pandemonium of praising applause!

A stranger no longer, welcome to J. Jonah Jameson, straight out of the comics and twice as brash and brassy. Above the din you barely hear he's Andrew Pastorio, a cast member of the coming "Spiderman movie". It's a performance, superlative, and for once even J. Johan is modest in the forefront of acclaim.

It's a tough act to follow, but Anthony Tollin proves himself equal to the task. That Golden Age great ... the Green Lantern lives again. Purple cape pushed aside, Tollin holds high a replica of an emerald colored railroad lantern. The sacred word of the oath is repeated once more.

The aura is still golden. It intensifies rather than lessens. Jay Dossett is responsible. Or is it really Dr. Fate? Splendid in silence, the helmeted hero of More Fun Comics fame hails a hurrahing humanity before moving on. ("Through The Wall, Baby!"- see Ragnarock no. 2 for explanation. An unsolicited commercial brought to you by 'Stuff, The Lonely Pilgrim!")

Stormbringer the Sword screams. Shagreeka the Wingless Bird-Woman shrivels before the onslaught of the deadly blade. Elric's whitened features betray no other emotion than grim triumph. Moonglum of Elwher nods satisfaction. Enacting the Moorcock panarama is Dana L.F. Anderson, not of Melrbone, but of the borough of Brooklyn; her husband, hom, and their friend Joan Winston as the fallen opponent. Barbaric splendor with a "Keep On Trekkin'!" touch.

Paula Boom, having dared the purchase of eye shadow, faces the crowd with confidence, his eyes glittering evilly out of skull-sockets. Not Yog Sogoth, but Al Bradford playing the part of Victor Von Doom's awesome Atilla-like ancestor. Walpole, Massachusetts has never seen his like before, and hopefully for the Bay State sanity, it shall never experience a trip of that type!

Still they arrive!

James Glenn streaks in as Flash Gordon!

Elliot Nesterman bounces over as The Demon!

Randy Medoff prepares for battle as The Gray Mouser!

With the words, "CAPTAIN MARVEL", this Captain Marvel, Jr. changes not to Freddy Freeman, but to Pat O'Neil.

...on leming readies for the round up of rambunctious randies as the Ghost Rider!

To quote Ben Pondexter: "Howard, you get an extra star!", meaning the Pittsburgh Comix Club has Howard Cruse as its representative and as Spiderman, he can fill in for Peter Parker anytime. Right, Aunt May?

To the delight of Undergroundiers everywhere, the Cheech Wizard hot-footed it across the limelight. Perhaps he scurrys to with heel-and-toe talent extraordinaire because Big Barda is not far behind. Cheez it, Cheech! Who is the Wizard and Barda? Ask the "Gaff", also known as Carl Gafford of Brooklyn. He'll tell you that Barda is Cara Sherman.

You may not recognize the face, but this Cheech Wizard is actually Carl "the Gaff" Gafford.

Don't mess with this chick, 'cause just like the character Big Barda that she portrays, Cara Sherman is real Women's Lib!

Once across and back again. That is the route followed by all. Save one, that is. Sneaking in for "curtain call" is Manny Maris, boy entrepreneur, fooling no one as a pretending Groucho Marx. No Manny, the secret word is not "UNDERGROUNDS". (Remember March 11th... Ima Groundhog!)

All too soon it's over; all too soon it's ended.

But wait until next year; you can be there.

We'll be there, too! Waiting to see:

Will Justice of Injustice Triumph?

Have you ever taken time out to wonder what it is like to work for one of those big conventions? Probably not. The people who do work at these cons are pretty much taken for granted. I mean, they always seem to be there when you need them. Well, it's not an easy job, as we see when one staff member from the 1973 Comic Art Convention tells us about...

MASOCHISM AND ME

Eli Friedman

"It lasted six days, doc!"

"Now, now, Mr. Friedman. Don't stand there muttering. We only have an hour. Come, lie down on the couch. There now. Tell me all about it!"

"Six days! And in the whole time slept six hours--- at most! You know what I ate in six days? Three slices of pizza, two hot dogs, ten cokes, two ice cream cones, and a milk shake! Where did I live? In a tiny room with from four to six other people at a time! Let me tell you about the odor in that place. A veritable den of evil!"

The psychiatrist scowled. "What was this, Mr. Friedman? Some bad dream? Some sinister plot of torture? What sick mind subjected you to these things?!"

I took a deep breath and continued. "No, doc, nothing like that. And I wasn't the only one! There were forty of us!"

The psychiatrist became excited. "Some massive crime! A concentration camp! Is that it?"

"Doctor, I've just been describing the average living conditions for a staff member at the 1973 Comic Art Convention. You know, the one held at the Commodore Hotel over the July 4th holiday weekend?

"But doctor, the real problem is I liked it! I had a good time!"

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"Be nice!"

That was what convention chairman Phil Seuling said to his staff the night prior to the convention. Phil laid down the ground rules used by a group of forty to deal with a crowd of over six thousand. "Patience, friendliness, and, above all, no noise or force!" Those were the things that Phil stressed. And believe it or not, the "kill 'em with kindness" method works. People pay attention to a plea issued with a smile a lot faster than they will obey a snarled command. It was little things like those that made the convention as enjoyable as it was for the over six thousand paid attendees. For the staff it was hard work--- and plenty of it!

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The doctor looked frustrated. H took off his glasses and wiped them on his tie. "So you worked for a comic book convention. Tell me all about it. What exactly was it that you did?"

"Well doc, I was on the security staff. See,whether or not you know it, some of those comics are kind of expensive collector's items. And on the ballroom floor of the hotel was a huge dealers room with one hundred and sixty two tables of comics and stuff. The Commodore has this policy, due to a fire a couple of years ago, never to allow any doors to be locked. So, to prevent rip-offs, there had to be an all night guard on the room, on the whole floor in fact. So, at any one time during the hours from eight in the evening to nine in the morning there had to be three guards present at all times. Of course it ran in shifts, but half the time no one showed up, so people wound up on duty for ten hours at a time... in the middle of the night!"

"But, of course," the doctor replaced his spectacles, "you were able to sleep during the day."

"No, you don't understand. The problem was more intense during the day. Not only did you have to have people watching the dealers room , but the exhibits as well.

"Let's see, there was a room of Jeff Jones and Mike Kaluta stuff..."

"Who?"

"Barbarian," I muttered under my breath, then continued. "And, let's see... there was a Marvel room, and a C.C. Beck exhibit, and of course there were the panel speeches and film shows on the lobby floor."

"But you had a big security staff to handle all those problems, right?

"To tell the truth, doc, the team consisted of twelve guys. In other words, we were on twenty-two hour shifts."

"But, Mr. Friedman," the doctor was visibly shaken, "You mentioned nearly forty people..."

"Security wasn't the only job that has to get done at a big convention. There's stuffing..."

"Stuffing!?!"

"That's where you prepare the package of goodies that every paying attendee gets. You start off with a bag from Warren Publications, add a pocket program, some flyers, and a few ads, a guide to New York, and a program book courtesy of TCR Publications. All those things have to be shoved into one package. But first they have to be sorted, uncrated, etc."

"I see. That does sound like a bit of work. But putting together a couple of grab-bags like those..."

"Six thousand of 'em, doc! And a team of ten to do it all!"

"Alright, Mr. Friedman, you seem to have accounted for twenty-two people. That should leave at least eighteen workers to..."

I opened my collar. Thinking back on that fourth of July weekend was becoming a terrifying habit. I was afraid it would cause a severe mental breakdown. Which was why I had consulted this head shrinking quack in the first place. How was I going to get through to him?

"The rest of them were to work at the registration desks. You know, you just don't walk in off the streets to go to a comicon. You have to pay something to the tune of $7, or $5 in advance, to just get into the place! And you need a dedicated bunch of zombies to sign in, take cash from, and otherwise cope with the hectic turmoil of registration.

"Doctor, you can't possibly have any idea what it's like to wake up after a night of three hours sleep to confront two and a half thousand people, all of whom must see you in order to do what they've been waiting all morning to do. And some of them are real animals, doc, throwing money at you, demanding change, asking questions you've heard a thousan times in the last hour like, "Is thi where you pay?" And through it all you've got to follow Seuling's Law, "Thou shalt be nice!" It's murder!"

"Terrifying!!"

I could tell I was finally getting through to this guy. "Is it any wonders you hear stories of how innocent fourteen year old boys join convention staffs, only to emerge six days later with the mentality of a roasted cucumber, and a strange sudden loss of all body hair!?"

"Oh! Is that where those people come from! Dreadful."

"And the worst part is when little things start to really get on your nerves. Like with me it was smells. In my room there were four guys, and about four people crashing at any one time. This is, mind you, in a room intended for two people.

"Well, one of these guys had a really bizarre foot disease that gave off an odor somewhat akin to a diseased swamp rat.

"On top of that," I continued, "Heather and Gwenn Seuling, the two young daughters of the con chairman, had found a stray cat living in the hotel. Naturally, they fell in love with it, naming it Whiz (in honor of Billy Batson's radio network). And guess where this creature wound up sleeping? Right, you guessed it! It was a cute black little kitten, but the odor led me to believe it was really a skunk with a touch-up job.

"After two nights, the place got so bad that we couldn't stand it! So, after getting off duty at three one morning, eight of us went for a walk from 42nd street to 49th."

"At three in the morning? Why?" said the doctor, now on the verge of fits.

"We were searching for an all night drug store in order to buy a

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Al Schuster's

FOURTH ANNUAL

INTERNATIONAL STAR TREK CONVENTION

AMERICANA HOTEL, JANUARY 10-12

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large can of Airwick Spray. When we finally did get it, we rushed back to the hotel room and attacked everything. Cat, room, and feet a-like! The whole can---gone!" I paused to catch my breath.

"Is there anything more you want to get off your chest, Mr. Friedman, before I start to crack myself!?"

"The thing that really bothers me, doctor, is something I did just before the close of the con."

"Which was?"

"I signed up for the security staff at the Creation Comicon the first week of next January. What's the matter with me, doc?"

Between tears I heard the good doctor sputter out something like, "You have the most masochistic tendencies of any one person I have ever met!!"

"Me? A masochist? Me? But doctor, I love working at comicons!"

As he leaped from the window I heard him shout, "That will be five cents, please!"

BARRY SMITH
(continued from 45)

directors, costume designers, and scriptters, and God knows what else. If you're a comic book artist, you just do the whole thing yourself. Like all the characters, all the "Actors" in quotes, are yours. You chose them yourself. And you choose how the action should go yourself. Everything is done yourself.

Eli: Well, Barry, thank you very much. A lot of times you can go into an interview knowing all the answers, able to write the article before you meet the person. But you surprised me several times. Thank you so much, it was so very interesting.

And so taking our leave of Barry Smith, walking once more out into the rain, there was some sort of fleeting illusion of a Cimmerian barbarian, charging past into the snow and hail of a northern Hyperborian eve.

finis

Casting for 'Doc Savage'

HOLLYWOOD—"Doc Savage . . . The Man of Bronze," the story of the legendary figure whose heroics and crusades against evil made him the world's most famous crime fighter in the 1930s and '40s, will soon be made into a Warner Bros. motion picture according to an announcement by Richard Shepherd, executive vice-president for production.

Shepherd also revealed that Academy Award winning George Pal will produce the action adventure and that Michael Anderson will direct the film recounting some of the most amazing sagas of the invincible golden giant's war against the forces of injustice

In addition, a massive, nation-wide talent search to find the ideal actor for the starring role in "Doc Savage . . . The Man of Bronze," is now under way

Based on the novel by Kenneth Robeson, "Doc Savage" will be the first of a series of feature films recounting the amazing sagas of the golden giant's war against injustice

DIDN'T THINK I'D CATCH UP WITH YOU, EH!?

Ragnarok Special feature!

That's right kidz! Yer old pal Dr. Phibes is back with a few pics from the latest costume caper. So sit back and enjoy a horrific display of snaps 'n shots from...

'73 World Con!

TIN KIAK
DRAGONS

A CONVERSATION WITH A DREAM-DESIGNER:

BARRY SMITH

August 2, 1973 and a summer rain poured around us as we made our way through the Manhattan streets. Our destination: the apartment of Barry Smith, master illustrator of Marvel's "Conan the Barbarian" series, and winner of the Shazam and Comic Art Fan Awards. We introduced ourselves to the tall, thin, long blond-haired, mustached artist, and looked about the apartment. On the desk was a partially inked set of pages for "Savage Tales" #3. The walls were richly decorated with graphic work by classic illustrators, all of whom serve as inspira--tion for the talented craftsman. The two Shazam plaques were hanging from one wall, and the oil painting for the third "Savage Tales" issue cover stood by another wall. Dave took out his portfolio of original art and showed Barry three of the gifted British-born illuminators's early pages. Barry himself was surprised to see these early works, and remarked upon the heavy influence of Jack Kirby in Those young days. He told us that the reason for the scarcity of Smith material on the collector's market today was because it was all stored in his bedroom. He likes to hold on to his work. Barry also remarked on how naive he used to be, back when he would do pages for free. As Barry glanced through the pages of Dave's book and saw work by Frazetta, Adams, Wrightson, as well as quick spur of the moment sketches by other artists, Barry started to talk about work he had done like that.

Barry: Oh, that's what I was doing at the last Comicon. I think the embarrassing thing about that with the Comicon is that all these drawings I was doing were terrible.

Dave: That's not a good atmosphere to work in.

Eli: I don't think the people who get the drawings really care all that much about the quality of the work, just to have it.

Barry: Some of them did. Nobody actually expressed anything to me, but they were sort of like walking off complaining to other people.

Eli: What was that, free stuff or paying stuff.

Barry: It was paying. It was for the Bill Everett Fund. And, you know, I did a few, like some guys offered me twenty dollars, some offered me like three, you know. But the guys who were giving me twenty were getting these terrible., just awful things, it was so embarrassing. Crowd around me, I'm drawing away, you know, I could see the picture going just wrong. You know, so bad. I was getting embarrassed and, well, I felt really bad about it.

Eli: Coming from England, how did you work your way into the American comics field, and what desire did you find to work in the field?

Barry: What was my desire? What stirred me into doing this thing?

Eli: Well, in England you don't think of an artist dreaming all their life about getting into the comic-book industry.

Barry: No, well, it's kind of like, sort of like, a unique situation. I suppose it still is, since I'm the only English artist working in the American comics. I had been reading comics all my life. You know, like American comics. Green Lantern, early Green Lantern, you know the National stuff.

Eli: Is there much of a fan following for comics in England?

Barry: No there isn't, there wasn't before. I wasn't a fan as I've often been, sort of described in fanzines; that I was a fan turned pro. I never thought of myself as a fan. I didn't even know what a bloody fan was, I thought it was a little thing that span round, feel cool.

Eli: Are there any at all in England?

Barry: There is now. In the last three years or so, three or four years, there's been these very minor comic art conventions. West London and stuff like that.

Eli: Are there any British comic publishing companies?

Barry: No, there was nothing like that, there still isn't. There's the Marvel English comics now. I used to read comics all the time., not because they were comics, but because they were fantastic art. They weren't all that good, looking back on it, but they were at the time the only things you could get it England, except for funny papers and silly little "comic" comics, the funny comics, you know.

Eli: How did Marvel approach you, or I guess you approached them?

Barry: Oh, they didn't approach me, they didn't know me from a hole in the wall. I was really into comics all my life, you know, from about four or five or whatever it was, and I used to emulate Gil Kane. This was pre-Jack Kirby, I had never heard of Jack Kirby at the time. Gil Kane, Carmine Infantino. About the age of fourteen, or something, fifteen, yeah fifteen, I went to art school. 'Cause I'd left my regular school, I don't know what the American equivalent is. I went to art school and I completely forgot all about comic art. I was doing things like graphic design and lettering and stuff like that. In my very last year of school, art school that is, college. All sorts of weird things were happening to me, like "Sgt. Pepper" came out. I don't know if this means anything to you. I'm twenty four now, I was, what, I was like seventeen or something, when "Sgt. Pepper" came out, seventeen or eighteen and it just hit me like a cosmic head bomb, it just changed my entire life. The way "Sgt. Pepper" hit me was as an insight-tight revelation, you know, it was like a head thing, what a silly phrase. So, I don't know, it just sort of made a lot of things happen in my head. Like I quit college six months before I should have done, dropped, so to speak. I don't know if that term is used in England, but that's what I did anyway. I just started getting back into fantasy, and things like that, and started drawing and painting these fantasy pictures again. And I was away from college for about six months, and when I went back it was like six weeks before the end of the whole thing, before my class was to be dissipated. And it turned out that I had to have so much work done before the end of the year, so that I could gain this scroll or something, credits. So I just drew this sixty page comic book. I took issues twenty three and tewnty four of the "Fantastic Four", or maybe it was twenty four and twenty five. But where the Hulk and the Thing battle for two long issues, a Jack Kirby extravaganzd. And I just redrew it and made it into a sixty page, sixty five page thing. I pencilled,inked,colored, and lettered it, and handed that in as my years' work. It took me like five weeks or something. I got my award and all that stuff. Everybody was pretty snowed by it, they thought it was very "pop". You know, drawing comic books. And that really got me back into comic books. And suddenly I was out of college, didn't know what the hell to do., I wasn't going to join some cruddy studio, you know, like all my friends had done. Doing paste-ups and crap like that. So I just, I drew about twenty or so pages looking like this (pointing to an early page) only worse.

Eli: Story pages?

Barry: I made up a few stories. I think I may still have them, no, maybe I haven't. I used to have them, I got them back at one point. I think I left them in England last time I went over there. They were huge, gigantic pages of artwork, and I sent them over to Marvel, you know sort of starry eyed and everything. I got this kind of half good-kind of letter back from Linda Fite, the wife of Herb Trimpe. And she said, you know, if ever you're in, er, out of town come in and see us. So, I I just upped and came. I got a two week visa, visitor's visa, came here, stayed for five months. I got kicked out, I was deported and all that stuff. I was-n't deported, but they...

Dave: Showed you your way back to the dock.

Barry: Yeah, that's right, yeah.

Dave: Hear's your hat, what's your hurry?

Eli: In that five month period, what did you do?

Barry: I did "X-Men", "Daredevil", "Avengers", all the stuff that appeared inearly 1969, more or less.

Eli: And then you came back how long after that?

Barry: I came back, I was in England for a year and a half, which seemed like more than that. It seemed like four years. It was just so long. Because I'd been naughty when I was here. You know, I'd worked which I shouldn't have done. It was very difficult, trying to get me a work permit. I had to go through lawyeres, and I was declared a genius. It's true! I'm filed away somewhere in Washington as a genius, and that is how I got back. It's only people of this higher mentality who could get in at the time. It was all tricky stuff, you know. All lies and bullshit. I finally got back, I think early nineteen seventy, or something like that. March of 1970. I've been hanging around ever since.

Eli: In your early work at Marvel it was easy to see you were influenced by Kirby, and a bit of Jim Steranko in your "Nick Fury" work. What other artists in comics do you think made an impression on your developement of your own style?

Barry: Believe it or not, Gil Kane and Carmine Infantino.

Eli: Anybody else you could think of?

Barry: No, just those two. That's a bummer because Gil Kane doesn't talk to me. Never talked to me. I just can't figure the fellow out. Well, he talks to other artists, yes. I was just so freaked out about Gil Kane, I mean years and years ago. That's when his work was much better than it is now, much more thought about, much more intellectual about his panels. Now he just hacks most of it out, every panel is the same as every other panel. When I came here in '70, or '71, whenever the heck it was that I finally got back, Gil Kane was the very first person that I laid eyes on. He was in the Marvel offices, he was walking up the aisle, I was walking down the aisle. I knew it was Gil Kane for some reason, somebody said, "That's Gil Kane." And I said, "Hi Gil!", and he just looked right through me. And ever since then he doesn't say a bleeding word to me, not a word. And it just pisses me off so much. You know, I used to really dig this guy. And he just won't talk to me. And it's the same with Infantino. I used to love Infantino's work, you know, "Flash", very early "Flash's", and "Adam Strange". Beautiful inking by Murphy Anderson. Fabulously weird stuff. Infantino was such a let down, when I met him. Such a weird fellow.

Eli: Publisher's tend to be.

Barry: Yeah. Infantino's been weird all his life, some people tell me.

Eli: Did you read any Conan or Conan type stuff before you did the book?

Barry: No.

Eli: Hadn't you read any of the stories

Barry: Oh well, yeah, like I did, prior you know to drawing the book. But I hadn't heard of it before. There was like a three of four month period that Roy had written something saying that probably we would be doing a Conan book or a Thongor book. So I said, "Who the heck is Thongor? Who is Conan?" So Roy sent me a load of books, started reading them. I hated Thongor. Just the most awful thing you've ever read, abyssmal writing.

Dave: That's the way it came through in comics, too.

Barry: Yeah, unfortunetly. I mean, it was just such a weak thing. But Conan just bowled me over. The very first story I read, which was "Tower of the Elephant", absolutly just killed me, greatest writing, the imagery was just astounding, it's also the best comic book I ever did.

Eli: Did you read it before you did the story?

Barry: Oh yeah. Oh sure. Yeah, I read about four of the books before I even drew "Conan" #1. Its just like I couldn't, like all the imagery in my head didn't jive with what I could do with my hands, I just couldn't draw it, even though I could see it in my head. I just couldn't get it together on the page. The first time I started to get it togeather was with "Tower of the Elephant"!

Apology Dept.: Due to the unfortunate fact that out tape ran out for about five minutes, and went unnoticed, a bit of the conversation con not be recorded verbatim. Barry went on to say that for

the two week period while he was working on "Tower of the Elephant" he went to sleep dreaming about the story, he was just so into it. He also explained that on the first few issues of "Conan he worked exactly from a very precise plan by Thomas. But after that Barry did a lot more of the breakdowns from panel to by himself, and most of the action is all his. For more recent adaptations he has worked straight from the prose story by Robert E. Howard. Barry also told how well he worked with Roy Thomas. And now back to our regularly scheduled interview:

Eli: I notice the Shazam awards hanging from the walls, and I'd like to know how you feel about having won those awards, as well as overwhelmingly taking the Comic Art Fan Awards this year?

Barry: Yeah, what a bummer that was. I wasn't even there to collect the award, I couldn't afford the price of the awards luncheon ticket. How do I react to it? Oh, I think it's very nice. The Shazam thing is just a con, you know, it doesn't mean too much to me.

Eli: Does the Fan Award?

Barry: The Fan Award meant much, much more to me than the Shazams though, because they're the people who enjoy it, you know. They're into the comic books. If they think that I do best, then I'm proud of that. In fact. I'm very glad that they think that. I mean that sounds very smarmy, smarmy, s-m-a-r-m-y, English slang which means, sort of, eucky. It does sound smaemy to say but I really appreciate that Fan Award. That Acad-emy thing is based on about half-a-dozen pro's who probably don't like me anyway, because I'm a snot, or something like that. I don't know, it just really doesn't mean anything to me, because I didn't win the best penciller or something like that, each year I'm nominated, and each year somebody else gets it. I'm getting embarrassed.

Eli: A lot of fans feel that you can't really have a fair voting since all the pros know each other, and makes things very biased with the Shazam Awards.

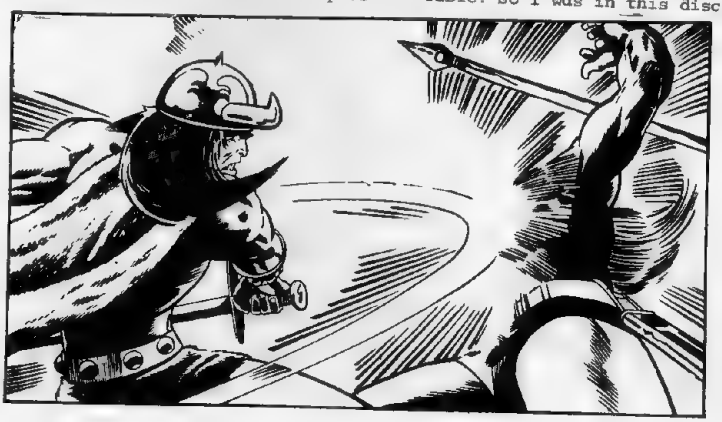
Barry: Yeah, and they're mostly National people. It's over fifty percent National in the Academy, which is kind of weird. I don't really want to get into it, it's just unreal.

Eli: At one time it was report that you had gone back to England, I guess this was when your visa ran out, that you went back to do story book illustrations Was that a cover up, or did you really go back to do story illustrations?

Barry: Oh, you mean last year? When I quite "Conan.?"

Eli: Yeah.

Barry: Oh no, it was nothing to do with my visa running out. I've got permanent residencey here in the U.S., if I want, unless I do something terrible, which I have done, and haven't told anybody about. Well actually I thought that there were some sort of half-truths put out about that somewhere or other, I for got where. Oh, it was in the "Creem" magazine, did you see the "Creem" thing about Marvel comics? It was all sort of covered up, you know, I was having this fight with Stan Lee about artist's rights, and all that kind of shit. This is really heavy. I was fighting with Stan over the fact that they keep my artwork, but they're not allowed to since it violates common law. All this no rights for the artists, "we buy the artwork outright", "You're just a little screw rat in the corner," Stan told me outright that I have no rights what soever. I was heated about it because of, you know, because my artwork is valuable now, and I can sell the stuff. But that isn't the case. I'm not thinking of money at all, I'm just thinking of the principle of the matter. The publishers rip-off the artists like nobody's business, and they just really do it terrible. So I was in this discussion with



Stan, which would probably turn into an argument, and got nasty, and we were swearing at each other, and being really unpleasant. I said, "Well look, I'm getting ripped off here, I do this artwork for you, you're paying for it, but all you're paying for is the right to publish it. You can't keep the artwork, you can't do it, if you want the paper then you better pay for it". If Marvel, or any company, wants to keep the artwork given to them by an artist they've got to pay sales tax on it. Sales tax in New York City is seven percent of the price they pay. Well, they don't do that. They've never done that! They're all so bleeding naive in Marvel comics, they don't know anything other that comics. They don't know anything about business. Well, you know, I'm not a bloody great business man, but they just don't know anything, man. It really is true. And, there's these things on the back of these checks, these little contracts, which say something like "I now sign over all rights to Marvel Comics", and then you've got to sign the check, and endorse it. And so you're screwed instantly! It's just real shit. So I was furious about this, and what nobody, like all the other artists,knew about it, but just didn't do anything about it. Either they were too scared, didn't want to make waves, or all that kind of wishy-washy stuff. So anyway I was really, like, uptight. And, you know, I was drawing the "Conan" book at the time, and the Conan book was selling real well, and all that stuff, so I had this bad scene with Stan and I walked out furious. I said something to Roy about, "If this doesn't work out, I'm just going to quit the bleeding book. I just don't want anything more to do with comics cause you're all rip-off agents, you're all really ripping off all the artists in the comics, everybody, they're just getting a bad deal." Stan wouldn't buckle, I wouldn't buckle, so I just had to stick to my word. I quit the book and left the country. That's why I don't draw "Conan" any more. You know, not the actual book, the regular book. I just won't do it.

Eli: In the "Savage Tales", in the B&W books do you get your stuff back?

Barry: On "Savage Tales" I get my artwork back, I wouldn't be drawing the damn thing. It isn't because I want the artwork, to sell it and go make lots of money, it's just the principle, principle with a big P. I just hate that syndrom. The publishers have got it all over every-body, all the creative people. The artists the writers, mostly the artists. Total control. It's like Nazism.

Dave: Doesn't Marvel offer to sell you your artwork back for five dollars a page?

Barry: Yeah! Isn't that incredible? Isn't that just fantastic? I don't know whether you can appreciate that, because you're not an artist, you know, like a working artist for Marvel comics. They say "We'll sell you back your art work for five dollars, man." It's just mind-blowing, I'm hoping that in ten years all these sods will just be an uncomfortable memory.

Eli: Anything else you want to say about that?

Barry: Oh, I could go on for bloody years about it

Eli: Doing any commercial art?

Barry: No, well, I don't know. I'm doing a paperback cover series right now. Kung Fu. "King Kung Fu." I just finished the first one yesterday. I got all sorts of weird things in the works. A "Bran Mak Morn" book, perhaps.

Eli: That's the underground. How much of that is completed?

Barry: it's hardly started actually. I started it almost a year ago, about 8 months ago. I did four pages on that once then I got tied up with doing "Savage Tales." So, I might do that. Roy and I have some sort of tentative plans about, for instance,, about doing some stuff for Continental magazines. You know, Spanish.

Eli: Okay. I guess that sort of covers the question of you wanting to work on any other character at Marvel.

Barry: Well, Doc Strange wouldn't be bad.

Eli: At one time it had been unofficially reported that Marvel would be buying a cover from Frank Frazetta for "Savage Tales". Thinking back on the times when the fans compared you to Frazetta, do you think that if he had done a cover he would have adhered to your version of Conan, what Marvel fans consider the definitive version?

Barry: Roy did mention something about trying to get Frazetta to do a cover. I can't really see it coming off. I don't know anything about Frank Frazetta. But anyway I'd imagine he'd be somewhat set in his style, ways, and things. You know, like, if he did a cover I'm sure he'd have to adhere to my version of Conan in some way. I don't know in what way. Maybe just make him a little handsomer, change that beastial face. I don't think Frazetta would cow to that too much, whether he would like that idea. I can't blame him, really. Yeah, and I like the way he does Conan, I think Frazetta's great. It's good, I think it's good although ther's been an over reaction to Frazetta, you

know. The thing is that "Savage Tales" will be so, so goddamn expensive. It's probably the most expensive B & W book that's been put out. This book here (pointing to the partially completed Conan story for "Savage Tales" #3) is 37 pages long. That just shows you how much money they've got to pay out. They have to pay a staff like Gil Kane, Al Williamson, all these expensive artists. If they have to pay some exorbitant amount for a Frank Frazetta cover as well, it would be marvelous and everything, the whole thing would just be too damn expensive, not in a reality way, but in a Marvel Comics way which is like a sort of reality, you know.

Eli: I remember back in the days of "Tower of Shadows" where you did a few gothic horror pieces like "The Terrible Old Man" and a "Hollywood actor turned monster" story. Can you see youself doing work for any of the other Marvel B & W horror books?

Barry: It just doesn't interest me. I might do it if I came up with a plot myself, if I wanted particulary to do something. It just doesn't interest me. Doing things like that. The only reason I've been working for Marvel, at this time, after I had gotten into this bullshit, is because of Conan. Because I want to draw that character, I want to draw those scenes. Look at this bleeding cover (pointing to a cover of "Savage Tales" #2). It isn't any reflection on John Buscema at all, because he can paint nicely. He's at least a little intellectual about what he does. But, this whole thing is Stan's

Ken Landgraf

idea right down the line. You know, you can't put John down, because it's Stan's doing. And it doesn't look like a sword and sorcery book! It looks like a.

Dave: it looks like a sweaty men's magazine

Barry: Yeah, being raped be Nazis and stuff like that. The magazine should be called "Savage WANKS" with a cover like that.

Eli: It's the type of cover, though, that reminds you of the pulp era, like "Weird Tales."

Barry: No, I don't think so. If it was a "Weird Tales" cover there would be an ele -ment of the fantastic present. There is nothing in that, it just looks like some sweaty men's magazine.

Eli: For the story that was illustrating ("Dweller in the Darkness") there could have been that tentacled octopus creature.

Barry: Yeah, yeah. That's just a putrid cover, that's really lousy. And, the cover is what sells the books.

Eli: Any comments on the other artists who have filled in on the color "Conan" comic? Gil Kane?

Barry: John Buscema, Ernie Chua, and the other guy? Yeah, I got a lot of comments. Kane's first issue was good, his second issue was hack. John Buscema's first issue was good, but that wasn't the first issue that was published. That was "The Blood Jewel of Bel-Hissar," sequential, just lovely stuff. And then he just became hack again. It's better that his "Fantastic Four" or his "Thor", more intellectual, but still hacky.

Eli: The current on, before "Winds of Khitai", "The Shadow in the Tomb" was also nice. Better than the story it replaced in the series, "Thing in the Crypt."

Barry: I'm saying it's hacky because...

Eli: I also loved Roy's script on that one.

Barry: Oh, well. I usually find very little to criticize in Roy. He does dumb things every now and again, writes a bad line, and it just sinks right to the bottom.

Eli: But he writes less of them than most writers.

Barry: Oh, yeah. I think he's the best, he and Archie Goodwin are the two best writers I think Roy is the best writer in the buisi -ness. You know like, when he writes a bad line it really is an awful line, you know just drops totally, cause he just writes something awful. Just like a paragraph or so. I mention that because this new book contains many such paragraphs.

Eli: It's more noticable with Roy, because the bad lines fall so badly out of place with the high quality of the rest of his writing.

Barry: Yeah, precisely. That's exactly it. Yeah, exactly. So the writing of the books since I've left is just fine, you know. The reason why I say John Buscema is just hacking it out is because I know he could do a billion times better. I'm sure he could eclipse anything that I did, if just put his mind to it, but he just works too hard and too fast. I didn't do anything except the "Conan", so I was just concentrating on that book entirely. With Buscema he does so many other things that he can't really think that hard about it, because he's a bit more professional than I am, you know, I'm a bit too into it. But I know if he really put his mind to it he could just do classic books. People would just be falling all over the place about it, because he's just an incredibl pencil drawer.

Eli: What was the story with "The Monste from the Monolith"? You did the layouts on the book, and Val Mayerik and a coupl of other artists finished it up.

Barry: What was the story with that? I think that was when I was quitting the book, isn't it?

Eli: No. That was during the Turanian war series, and you were well into it then. That was followed by "The Shadow of the Vulture" and "The Song of Red Sonja."

Barry: "Black Hound of Vengeance" and "Red Sonja." I don't know. I forgot what happend with that, it was kind of weird. I really can't recall. I know I hated it. I just despised everything about it. That was the one that was colored by George Roussos, who colors comic interio about as well as I can fly. That was jus an abomination, I thought. I just hated everything about it. It just disguested me, what a bringdown.

Eli: How much of the work on that book did you do?

Barry: I think I did sort of half-half type pencils on the first two pages. The rest of the book I just did the lay outs for, But I went over it after it came back, inked and everything by Mayerik and etcetera. I was just irked by it. I just sat down with a pen and tried to ink over it as much as I could. And there were a few faces I redid entirely, I did

one close-up. It was just crap. I was ashamed because that epic idea we had with the great war was just such a great thing. We planned it out, and started it .

Eli: It worked out so well!

Barry: It worked out well. Well, no it didn't work out well.

Eli: Any other gripes, about Stan and the original art problem?

Barry: It isn't really a gripe any more, I just take it in my stride. It was a gripe then, you know, about the original artwork.

Eli: Still it must be frustrating but on a wider scale. When I was arguing with him, way back when, it was frustrating, it was an immediate frustration, it was a heavy thing about it, getting into the fighting and arguing. It sounds rather pompous, but I view them just as ass holes, I just really think they're clods. The only good people in that side of the buisness worth dealing with are the artists and writers. They're the talent, the people with good heads, something interesting to talk about, something interesting to tell you back. The publishers, the business men, the distribution managers, and the, you know, all those bloody little wankers, just to get into hating them is a wast of effort. It's like walking down the street hating every ugly person you see, it's just, they don't know you hate them, so what's the use of hating them?

Eli: I don't think you really hate the people. Don't you just hate the jobs they represent?

Barry: Yeah, well with the people I don't know. I think they're all shmucks as people, too. I mean they must be to be in the positions that they're all in. To do these dumb mind-ed things. Gods! Just to be an accountant, or to sit and add up figures all day about how many comic books you sold yesterday. They're really pretty dumb! Just something lacking in their imagination, and I just don't want to talk to anybody who hasn't got an imag-ination, you know.

Dave: I suppose you're not too thrilled about sharing the billing on the splash page with the colorist, the letterer, the editor, and the person who emties the wast paper basket.

Barry: That doesn't bother me really. I always try to get my name as big as possible. In fact it was I who first, I mean, like, I was the person who started this whole thing about colorist getting credit. For some vagrant reason or other.

Dave: It was good you want to know who to praise...

Eli: And if it was bad, who to blame.

Barry: Yeah. It was when I got back the third issue of. "Conan." "The Grim Gray God." Which I thought was beautifully colored. It was colored by my girl friend of the time, Mimi Gold. She did such a beautiful job. Just beautiful coloring. And I thought, you know, I could see my name, I could see Roy's name, and Stan Lee who doesn't know anything about the bleeding comic, doesn't even read it, but his name is there. He doesn't even know who Conan is! But his name is there. And there wasn't a credit to the colorist. And it's like the colorist can make or break the book. So I called up Roy, and I said, "You really got to give some credit to Mimi, for doing all these books so beautifully. "And he was very adament, he didn't do anything about it, said it was im-possible thing to do, because the comic is always colored at the very last moment, you know. Credits were done, and the colorist could get changed, and then the credits would be wrong. He gave me this whole line about why he said it couldn't be done, Barry, and then a year later they do it. So, I'm glad that colorists are getting credited, and, you know, if you're an anonymous person coloring the book, then you can get away with anything. Nobody's going to blame you. You can do it terribly, Won't get these irate letters pouring in saying "Stuff you're brush up

your arse" you know. You've got to do a decent job, otherwise it's embarrassing, you know. But there are some good colorists at Marvel right now, not including myself, like Glynis Wein who is just fantastic, bea -utiful, just the best colorist in the whole business. And Marie Severin who is fantastic. Linda Lennmann is good too. I guess that's about all. I like to color my own material.

Eli: Have you?

Barry: Oh, yeah.

Eli: Which ones?

Barry: "Red Sonja", "Black Hound of Vengeance".

Eli: That was before they gave credit.

Barry: Yeah. Nobody knows the books I colored. I've colored a lot of books! Because Mimi Gold was my girl friend for a year and a half or so when she was a color -ist, and she'd get screwed up and couldn't get a job finished. So, I'd just finish it for her, you know. I did a lot of coloring. I colored these "Thors," tons of "Avengers" books.

Eli: What about the picture in the second "Illustrated Beatles Lyrics" book?

Barry: They ran it in black and white which was a bummer. (Barry took out one of his own copies of the drawing in color, which is a lot more distinctive, and a lot lovelier than the original illo as printed.) It's easy to miss, in black and white, very non-descript.

Mark: This may seem like a strange question but I'm noticeing your gutar and your record collection, your stereo. Being a musician myself, does music in itself influence your drawing in any way?

Barry Music influences me more than other people's drawing. I was just filling out some silly thing for Jerry Bails for "The Who's Who of American Comic Books." And one of the questions was "Who's your major influence(s) ,all I'm going to say is the Beatles, Pink Floyd, and Cat Stevens, you know. I don't have any influences art-wise. Well, that's not not true. Alphonse Mucha. Do you know about him? Art nouveau artist. I guess he's my major art influence, drawing influence. And the pre-Raphelites who were a group of English artists in the last century. They were sort of like the Beatles. They just painted.

Mark: You draw these sort of things...Like you know the group "Yes"?

Barry: "Yes"!?

Mark: Yes.

Barry: Yes. You dig "Yes"?

Mark: Yeah, man!

Barry: Fantastic stuff! "Fragile" especi -ally.

Mark: Jethro Tull?

Barry: I think they're fantastic! That's good! I'm glad you asked. That's like the major influence for my part. Does that freak you out? I mean you're looking at me...

Mark: I had to ask, because I saw your stereo set up.

Barry: Yeah. I can't really work without music. That's what a lot of people say, but, there's a certain kind of music, like The Beatles I guess are the heaviest thing. Kind of late Beatles, from "Sgt. Pepper" onwards. Well, no, that's an imjustice to the early stuff which was beautiful as well. "Revolver." Pink Floyd I guess are my heaviest thing right now, they're just so British, so English. They just keep saying things in their music which are just such heavy things. The Floyd is just the heaviest thing, the <u>really</u> heaviest thing. Then "Yes",.

Mark:Like the dynamics of the music just paint pictures...

Barry: I know exactly what you mean, especially with the "Fragile." Which is just a killer! I've drawn so many panels to that music "The South Side of the Sky. Which is really fantastic. I try to take the sounds, and draw according to what you're feeling. I sit here and the speakers on both sides zooming across with weird sounds. Fantastic!

Mark: "Heart of the Sunrise" on that albu too.

Barry: Yeah, that's just what I need here

right now, but it would drown out your tape recorder.

Eli: How about movie influences. I notice some stills around.

Barry: Oh, that's the "Kung Fu" stuff. They're like karate films, and stuff like that.

Eli: Do any films influence your work at all?

Barry: No. The last film I saw which... Films don't influence me. I very rarely see films.

Eli: Like. Jack Kirby is very heavily influenced by films.

Barry: Yes, I know. That's very evident. It's just funny. It's evident but it isn't obviouse. Because he could take more from the films, cine-matic stuff, which can be so tricky if you put it down right. It's really weird, and it's hard to do it, too. I just think Jack does it all too quick now.

Eli: He's got a very heavy work load, and he gets it all done.

Barry: I think he works too fast, too hard. He does nice stuff, he should be inked by someone better than Royer, because by themselves his pencils just fall apart, which didn't used to be the case. Just happens to be so now. He works hard. He's more like in it for the business, rather than the drawing. He's a very heavy business artist. I never think of the money. I know that sounds really weird. It sounds like an obviouse thing to say, "I don't do it for the money". I don't even pick up the vouchers for the work I do! I draw it and hand it in, and three weeks later someone asks me if I've been paid for it. Anyway, the last heavy film I saw, which was really good was a film I thought I'd never see, it's such a dumb title. "Paper Moon."

Eli: Directed by Peter Bogdanovich.

Barry: Yeah, right. The bloke's a genuis, just a genuis. I love it, he's the essence of what a director...

Eli: How bout things like "2001" or "A Clockwork Orange"?

Barry: Oh, "2001" I saw so many years ago, it's just a part of the past now. I loved it, I love the film. It blew my mind at the time. Well, you know, like a profound thing on me at the time. Everybody was saying it's such a profound thing, so I said, "Yeah, well, that's really profound." But now I realize it wasn't that a profound, heavy a thing on me. Just brilliant technical effects.I was on the sets of "2001". I saw how the thing was made. All the little aircraft, space vehicles, That wheel that spun.

Eli: This was at Shepperton?

Barry: Shepperton Studios, yeah. My uncle worked there with a director so I got in. And, it was interesting. You know, to see the way the film...to see the way everything is done. It kills everything for you. You know, all the fantasy.

Dave: I noticed you had a first edition copy of "The Making of Star Trek"

Barry: Yeah, I love "Star Trek." I saw the animated credits at the July con. I didn't like it. I'm so down on animation.

Eli: That's surprising, because most artists feel that anything you can do live, you can do just as well, if not better with animation?

Barry: No, no, you misunderstand. It's just the way I said it, I'm down on animation because animation isn't good.

Eli: Oh, it's not the process, it's the quality of what's being done. How about "Yellow Submarine?"

Barry: You mean as animation? Not so hot. The first thirty five minutes ware just terrific, but...the animation effects! Have you ever heard of this guy Richard Williams, Dick Williams? He's not with any company, he's got his own studio. British. Did you ever see the film, it won an Emmy this year. "A Christmas Carol"? Did you see all that cross-hatching and everything like that. Dick Williams. Now that guy is heavy, that is animation to me. I did an ad for a hairwash, Yucca-dew. I'm just dying to see it on television. All I was doing were like the key drawings. I did about twelve key drawings. Three to a sequence. There's this guy walking across the desert and there's this Yucca-Dew plant. He sticks his hand in it, and all these bubbles come out.

He starts washing his hair, and there's this inane background music "Yucca-Dew, Yucca Dew!!" And then there's this girl, absolutely gorgeous girl, beautiful, they gave me photographs to work from. It goes from cartoon into live film, and then back into cartoon. And I did the key drawings. So after about a week or so I got all the sheets back from the animator. By George, I really couldn't describe how ultimately abominable they were. The guy was supposed to be walking, and he kept bobbing up and down like this, and his head kept getting bigger, and his huge fingers kept popping up out of nowhere. He just couldn't keep it togeather at all.

Dave: It sounds like they have Robert Crumb over there!

Barry: I forgot, this guy who did it was supposed to be one of the best guys in the buisiness. I was very, very annoyed. And I decided that I could do it better. So Flash! So I animated the thing myself, and I just scrapped all these drawings, and did most of the thing myself. Didn't get paid for it, typically. So that's my first taste of animation.

Barry: No, I haven't seen the bleeding thing at all. They had a preview over at Phos-Cine, this company I was working for, working with at the time. But I just never got to see it. I didn't bother going over. It was on 77th Street or something like that. I couldn't get up there at the time. I keep watching the TV, you know, but it's impossible, the damn thing never comes on. So I'm down on animation. I would love to do animation! You know, I'd love to. There was to be put togeather a show by Steve Lemberg, which will probably would have been a bummer. He did the Marvel at Carnegie Hall thing. He's doing this thing called "American Freedom Train". You may have heard about it. Did anybody see the Carnegie Hall thing?

Mark: Did you see it?

Barry: Did I see it. I was in it. On the stage, planking the guitar. That's how memorable it was! Yeah, with ol' Roy doing his Elvis Presley imitation! (Barry took out a copy of a song sheet for "American Freedom Train" for which he did the black and white cover. It was in a word, beautiful.) Don't think too badly of that, it took me only two hours.

Eli: How long does it usually take you to do a complete page?

Barry: There's no way of telling. It just depends.

Eli: How about the splash page for "Red nails"?

Barry: Oh, well you see "Red Nail" took me, well that's the first part of "Red Nails" took me six months to draw and ink. Like I did that page over six. I didn't like just sit down and do it. I just added bits here and there. There's just no way of telling how long it takes me to do something. I don't really have a professional atitude you know. I don't think I've got to get three pages out a day. Or even a page and a half a day.

Eli: Which is a good atitude to have.

Barry: No it isn't a good atitude.

Eli: Sure, that way you don't find yourself hacking it out to meet a quota.

Barry: Yeah, that's why I'm poor, you see. It's why I'm not rich. It's why I'm not offering good wine. I just don't have any bread. I have so little money it's untrue. I work like a slave, you know. All the time continually working and I just have so little to show for it. I've got like three hundred dollars in the bank. that's all. When you live in New York City, you know, go out for dinner every night. It's really a drag. I would love to be super professional, knock out ten pages a day, and be rich. But something in my conscience doesn't letme. Either that or I'm lazy. Probably the latter.

Dave: You seem to have a mind for business. You were talking about the sales tax before.

Barry: No, I've got no head for business at all. It's just something I've learned, that's all. Just somebody mentioned it, somebody who was outside the field. I've only got one friend really in comics, which is Herb Trimpe, a good friend of mine. All my other friends are not in the comic book buisness, they're in other fields. Graphics, or illustration.

Dave: You wouldn't consider opening up your own company, like Steranko did with Supergraphics?

Barry: No. You mean like comics related thing? No, that just doesn't...I wouldn't want to do it. I'm not that into comics. Comics per se. You know, like Jim can do all this Mediascene thing and all that, cause he's into it, comics. He was a comics fan. He thinks a lot of comics. I don't think anything of comics. I hate comics! I think comics stink! I like

artists who work incomics. I admire some writers in comics, Roy, Archie Goodwin and Steve Engleheart at times. He can be a great writer when he wants to be. But comics per se don't mean any thing to me. I'm not American, I didn't grow up with them as an American type thing.

Eli: You said you liked comics as a child.

Barry: Yeah, but it wasn't the comic comic, it was the art, it was the romantic atitude of the artists. I like that guy up there, see that painting up there. I like Alphonse Mucha, I like Alma Tadema, Gustav Klimt, Coles Phillips, Waterhouse, Rossetti, and Maxfield Parrish. These are things that I get in to. This stuff is turn of the century, this stuff is late eighteen seventees. That's turn of the century, that's nine teen twenty. That's 1915, you know. In those days artists could do things that were of a romantic nature. They could do that kind of stuff, 'cause it was in vogue at the time, to be romantic. You know, fantasy picyures. But nowadays you can't bloody do it, because people are so hard about everything. Like anything that's romantic they don't want to know about. Unless it's old like this stuff. Then they consider something sort of fetish, kind of, memorabilia type of thing. And they kind of miss the point about it. And if you're of a romantic nature, then the only thing you can do is draw comics. 'Cause it's the only outlet now for the artist of that nature to comics as an item, as a thing to behold, for ten of fifteen cents, don't really bother me at all. It's the artist inside the book who is trying to do some -thing that he can't do anywhere else. Thats what interests me.

Eli: I think that's the way the people who are considered comic fans, not just the casual buyer at the newstand, view comics. Nobody cares about the actual plot line, they're all the same, some done a bit better than others. Not the kid who wants to see a superhero do battle, but the people who come to the July Comic Art Convention or read Ragnarok or The Comic Reader. Comics represent things to people. A power struggle, a simplification of the battle between good and evil.The stories for the most part are rehacks or rehacks, garbage. You can't get the simple, child like innocence of good versus evil in other media, movies, TV, because it's not marketable. That's a lot of the charm of comics.

Barry: Yeah, I agree. People don't realize that. But it's so obvious, so on the surface, that they just miss that reasoning entirely. It's like they can't can't see the woods for the trees. That appeals to me, I know a guy, Richard Merkin, who's a painter. Famous painter. Modern, "modern" painter. He's really into comics, he's got the entire collection of "Action", "Batman" and "Superman" numbers one and two, and all that. He digs it for the simplicity of it. The child like reasoning behind good and evil. He loves the old Bob Kane stuff, very, very old "Superman" stuff by Siegal and Schuster. He can't stand modern comics, you know. He can't stand the way I draw, the way Neal draws,Joe Kubert and so forth, like that, that's what I've heard: It's a very wide angle field of appraisal, comics. You know, just get off on them. There's all sorts of different levels to take it on. The simplis -tic attitude or the lacking of the simplistic attitude really can't be influenced. I just like the art. If you get a good writer to go with it, so much the better. The art is the thing.

Eli: A lot of the times you can see an unletterd page in Conan and still be able to follow the story of the book.

Barry: Yes, well, that's the essence of comic book story telling. That's something I didn't say, I would love to be like a movie director, but I can't because I didn't strive toward being such a thing. So the next best thing is doing comics.

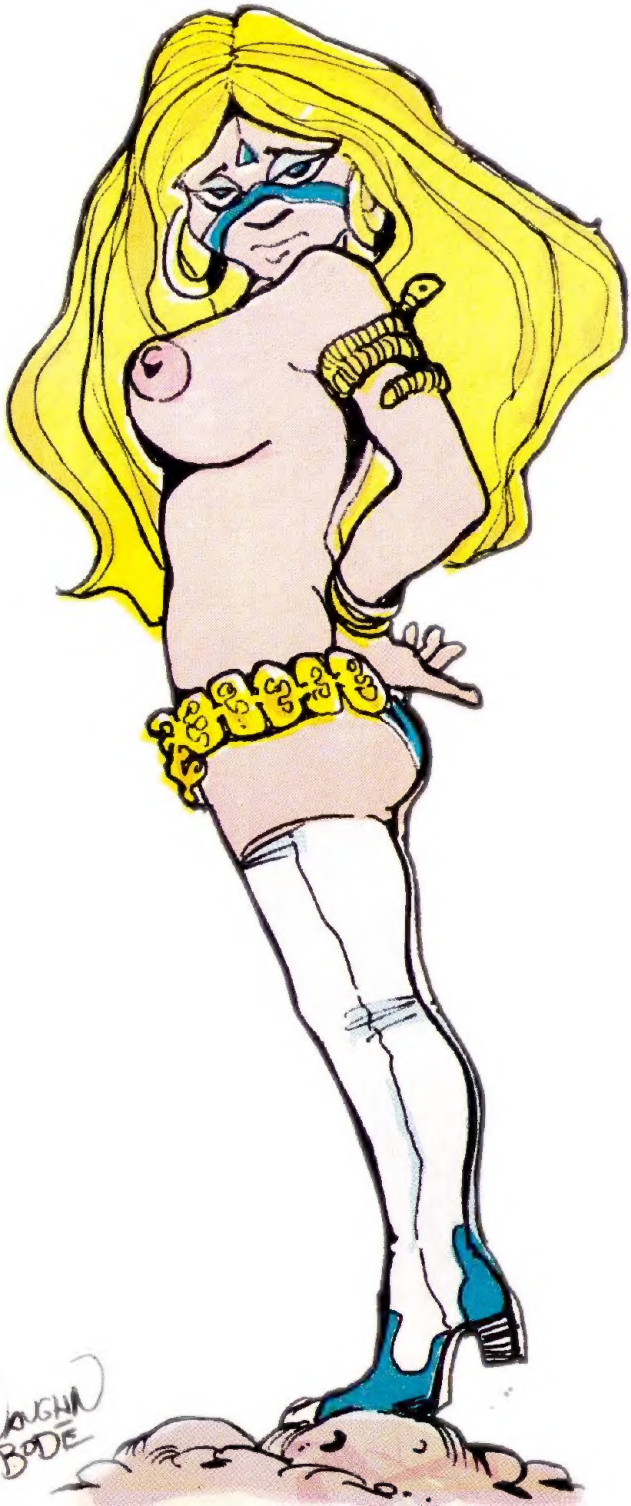
Eli: You're doing it on a small scale.

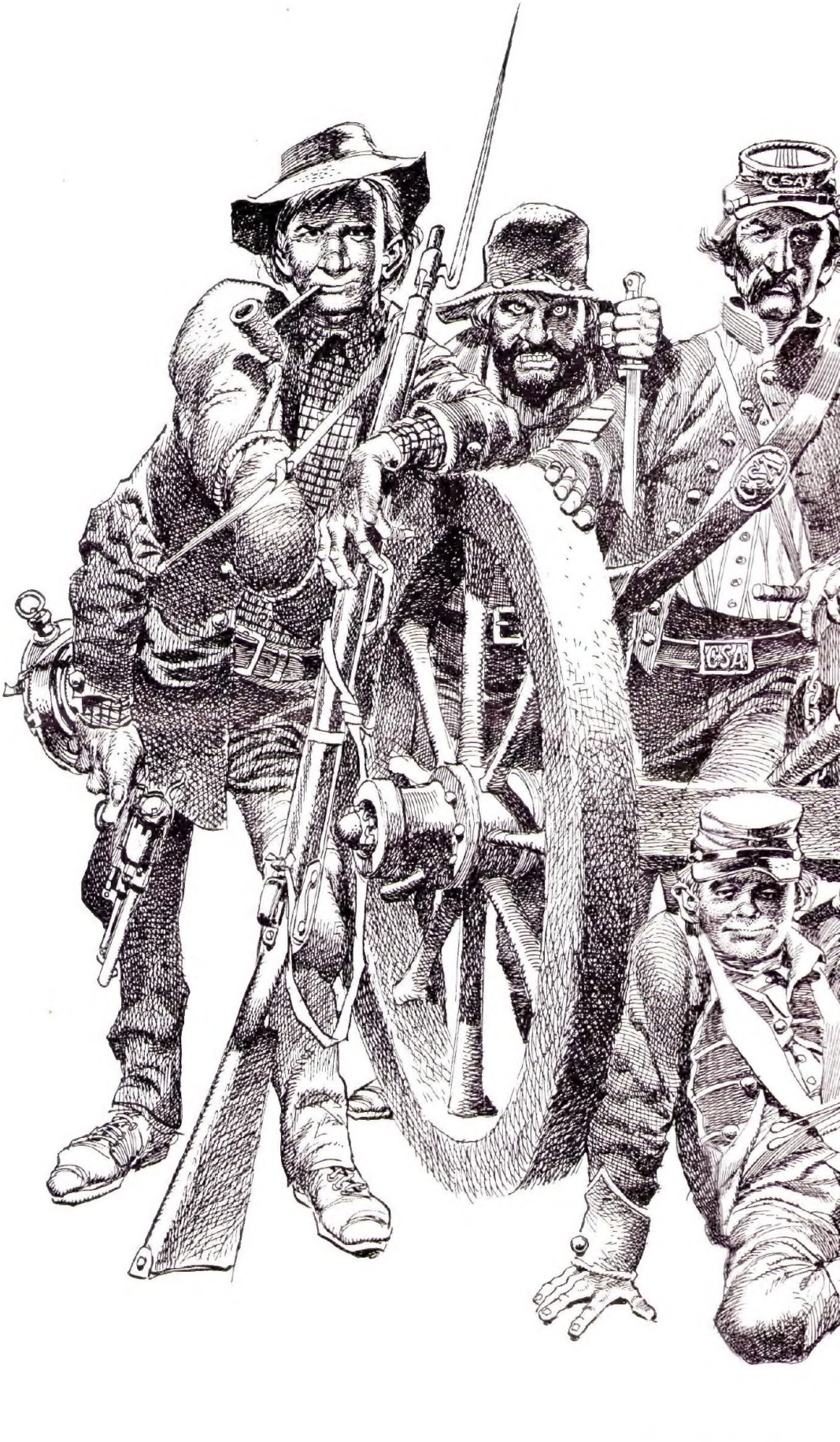
Barry: Well again there's two ways of looking at it. Like with doing it on a small scale, or even doing it on a grand -er scale, because with movies if you're a director you've got so much to deal with, such as all the actors, and set

(Continued on page 30)

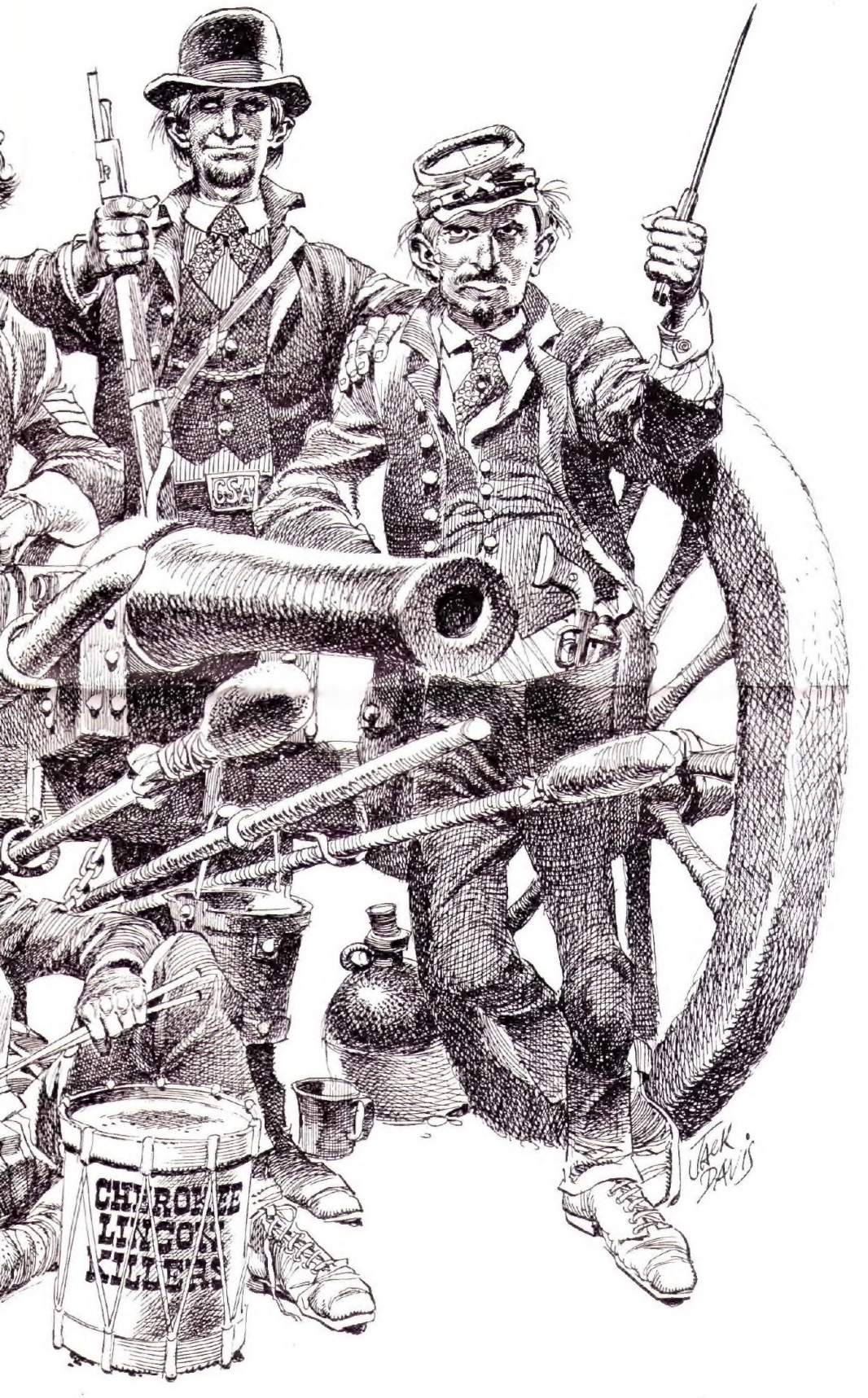
SOLDIER HERO
WITH NO CAUSE LEFT TO FIGHT
NO PLACE LEFT TO HAVE
NO VICTORY LEFT TO OBTAIN
SOLDIER HERO
WITH NO CAUSE LEFT TO FIGHT
NO PLACE LEFT TO HAVE
NO VICTORY LEFT TO OBTAIN

BUT NOW....
So what's wrong? I don't get it...
You see-I must return to my ship by ten, otherwise m y superiors will suspect foul play,
You know how paranoid interstellar invasion superiors get...
What time is it now?
Five past ten.
DA-BOOM!
FLIK
The transit authority is definitely going to hear about this!


VAUGHN
BODE



SOME GEORGI



A MILITIA BOYS